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FROM USMISSION UNESCO PARIS

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SUBJECT: UNESCO: CULTURAL DIVERSITY CONVENTION: SWISS
UNESCO AMBASSADOR LENDS UNQUALIFIED SUPPORT TO ITS
OCTOBER 2005 ADOPTION

REF: Bern 1420

1. The Swiss Ambassador to UNESCO, Ernst Iten, gave a ringing endorsement of the June 2005 preliminary draft Convention on Cultural Diversity during his 20 September speech to UNESCO's 58-member Executive Board and urged the Director General to submit it for adoption to the October 2005 UNESCO General Conference. This step would also expedite ratification of the Culture on Intangible Convention, he said, as both Conventions are necessary to build a solid foundation for international law concerning culture. (Note. UNESCO Director General Matsuura is particularly determined that the Convention on Intangible Cultural Heritage be ratified by member states and implemented as quickly as possible. End note.)

2. Begin rough translation of excerpt from speech:

The most important current item ("l'actualite") in the field of Culture remains for the Swiss -- as for many others - cultural diversity. Switzerland has thus supported the procedure of elaboration of a Convention on the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions, and has taken an active part in the work. Switzerland supports the preliminary draft of the Convention that was adopted on June 3, 2005 at the end of the third session of the Intergovernmental meeting of Experts and subscribes to the recommendation formed by the aforementioned meeting to the Director General to submit the preliminary draft in this state ("en l'etat") to the General Conference in view of its adoption (with several formal technical changes of the Secretariat). Switzerland hopes that the Executive

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Counsel will transmit an explicit recommendation to the General Conference along these lines. My authorities are convinced that this step will facilitate the procedure of ratification of the Convention on Intangible Heritage of 2003, inasmuch as the "bouquet" of international law as regards cultural matters would then be complete.

End rough translation of excerpt of Iten 20 Sept speech.

3. Comment: Can Swiss have it both ways? They want to sign on to the convention while still entering into a bilateral free agreement.

Oliver